

markings and a broad black bar on the nape, reddish below. Upper lip has black vertical markings. (2) Light or dark purplish brown above, with 5 black stripes edged with white, the white lines being continuous or regularly broken, the brown of the dorsum extends on to the lateral edges of the ventrals. (3) Blackish or greenish blue above, with 3 or 5 black stripes, not edged with white. When only 3 striped, the outer pair are absent. Head markings are usually less distinct than the first one.

Recently while conducting a herpetological survey in the Silent Valley National Park in Kerala, a *Callophis nigrescens* was collected with the following colour pattern. The specimen has a uniform glossy black dorsum without any stripes on the body and tail. The head is blackish with white symmetrical markings. The upper jaw is blackish

with two separate white markings. The lower jaw is white in colour. The basal row of costals have a narrow, indistinct white line, which ends near the vent region. The ventral side is deeply reddish, lighter in the anterior region, with white cross markings, produced by the free end of the ventrals.

Callophis nigrescens has not yet been reported from Silent Valley or adjacent areas (Murthy, 1986). Hence, this is an addition to the herpetofauna of Silent Valley.

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25. NOTES ON A NEW DISTRIBUTIONAL RECORD AND THE ECOLOGY OF *RHABDOPS OLIVACEUS* (BEDDOME) (REPTILIA: SERPENTES: COLUBRIDAE)

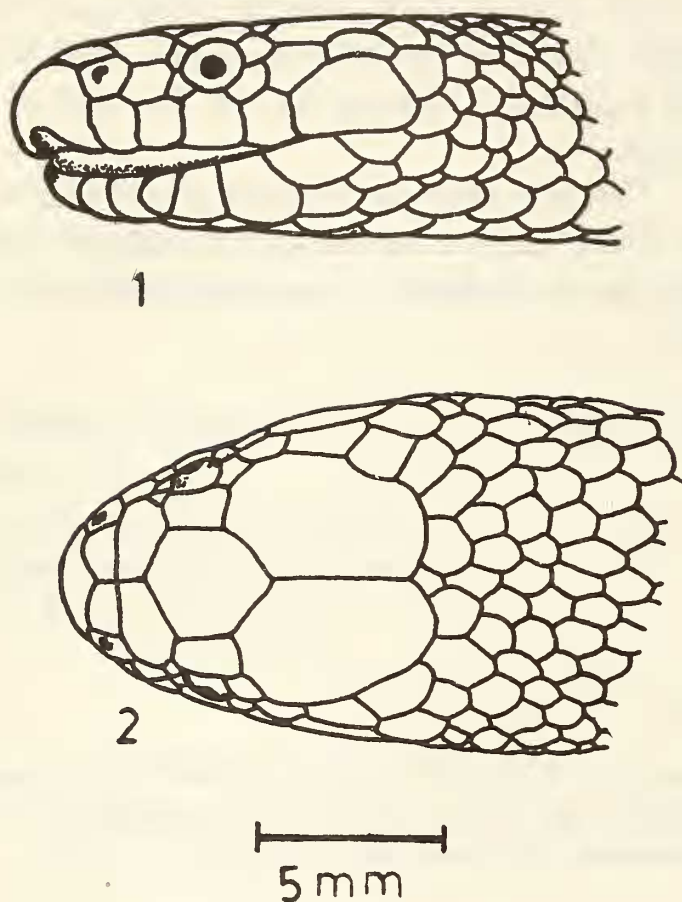
(With one text-figure)

The Olive forest snake, *Rhabdops olivaceus* (Beddome), as the common name denotes, is olivaceous or yellowish brown above and below in colour, with 4 longitudinal series of small black spots (2 dorso-lateral and 2 lateral) on the body. The snake can be distinguished by its short maxilla bearing 10-12 small, subequal teeth; head not distinct from neck; nostril in the nasal, valvular, crescentic; body cylindrical, elongate; scales in 17 rows throughout, without apical pits; ventrals rounded, indistinctly edged with dark brown; 2 internasals and 2 prefrontals.

The species originally discovered from Mananthavadi, Wynaad district, Kerala is so far recorded to be confined to Wynaad (Smith, 1943; Murthy, 1986).

A recent faunistic survey conducted in Trichur district, Kerala resulted in the collection of a specimen of *R. olivaceus* (Figs. 1, 2) from an evergreen forest patch at an altitude of approximately 610 m above msl on the Vellanimala Hill top. The specimen was collected below a boulder from a spring fed shallow stream. Along with the snake, caecilians (Amphibia) and earthworms (Annelida) were also collected.

The genus *Rhabdops*, besides *olivaceus* (Beddome) includes the species *bicolor* (Blyth) known from the Khasi and Mishmi Hills (north-eastern India), Kachin Hills (Myanmar) and western Yunnan (China). *R. bicolor* is found in hills along its range and feeds on worms and slugs. *R. olivaceus* also appears to be a hill species as it is known from



Figs. 1-2. Head of *Rhabdops olivaceus* (Beddome).
1. Lateral view. 2. Dorsal view.

the hill district of Wynaad and currently from the Vellanimala Hill of Trichur district. Besides, the food habits of *R. olivaceus* are likely to be similar to that of *R. bicolor*, as the snake was found to be associated

with other vermiform animals mentioned above.

The collection data and morphometric measurements of the specimen examined are as follows:

Material examined: 1 ex. Locality: Vellanimala, Pattikkad Forest Range, Trichur district, Kerala, India. Date of Collection: 9-x-1995.

Collector's name: K.C. Gopi *et al.* Z.S.I., Calicut. Total length including tail: 542 mm. (Tail, 88 mm.) Ventral: 218. Anal: 2. Caudal: 64.

The specimen collected is deposited in the faunal holdings of the Western Ghats Field Research Station, Zoological Survey of India, Calicut. Drawings of the head pattern of *R. olivaceus* are provided for easy identification as the same is not given by Smith (1943) in his Fauna volume.

The present record of collection of *R. olivaceus* from Trichur district establishes its occurrence in the hill areas of Western Ghats south of Wynaad. Ecological observations suggest similarity in habits and habitat with that of *R. bicolor*.

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Burma including the whole of the Indo-Chinese subregion. Reptilia and Amphibia, Vol. 3 - Serpentes. London: Taylor and Francis.

26. RANGE EXTENSION AND SOME ASPECTS OF MORPHOLOGY AND HABITAT OF AN ANURAN SPECIES *LIMNONECTES BREVIPALMATA* (PETERS, 1871) (RANIDAE)

The frog species *Limnonectes brevipalmata* (Peters, 1891) (= *Rana brevipalmata*), though it resembles *Limnonectes limnocharis* closely, is a distinct species (Pillai, 1980). The distribution of this uncommon frog was given as Kerala and Tamil Nadu by Inger and Dutta (1986). Sekar (1991)

extended its range of occurrence upto Karnataka based on a specimen in the BNHS collection collected from Someshwar, south Kanara in Karnataka.

During a study on the amphibian fauna of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP), Borivali,